

WE CLAIM:

1. A wireless telephone device having an associated stored-value calling account, the wireless telephone device comprising:

5 a selector;

a communications program configured to communicate with a recharge service via a communication network;

10 a recharge option selectable by a user upon actuation of the selector, the recharge option being configured to cause the communications program to initiate a recharge transaction with the recharge service via the communication network, in order to add calling units to the stored-value calling account.

15 2. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the communication network includes a WAN, and the recharge option is configured to cause the communications program to contact a recharge server of the recharge service via the WAN.

20 3. The wireless telephone device of claim 2, wherein the recharge server is a web server, the communications program includes a web browser, and the recharge option is a link to the web server of the recharge service.

4. The wireless telephone device of claim 3, wherein selection of the link causes the web browser to download a recharge web site for display on the wireless telephone device.

5. The wireless telephone device of claim 4, wherein the recharge web site displayed on the wireless telephone device includes a user-selectable recharge amount.

6. The wireless telephone device of claim 3, wherein the recharge option is a bookmark that is, upon selection, configured to download a web page from the recharge server at the recharge service.

7. The wireless telephone device of claim 2, wherein the recharge option is configured to cause the communications program to contact a recharge server of the recharge service and add a predetermined recharge amount to the stored-value calling account.

8. The wireless telephone device of claim 7, wherein the predetermined recharge amount is added to the calling account without further user-input.

9. The wireless telephone device of claim 7, wherein the fee for the predetermined recharge amount is billed according to information stored in a user profile on record with the recharge service.

10. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the communications program includes a telephone communications program and the communication network includes the PSTN, and wherein selection of the recharge option is configured to cause the telephone communications program to initiate a telephone call to the recharge service.

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11. The telephone device of claim 10, wherein the recharge option is configured to initiate a telephone call to an Integrated Voice Response system at the recharge service.

12. The telephone device of claim 10, wherein the recharge option is configured to initiate a telephone call to a live customer service representative at the recharge service.

13. The wireless telephone device of claim 10, wherein the recharge option is an entry in a contacts list, the entry, upon selection, being configured to cause the telephone communications program to initiate a telephone call to the recharge service.

14. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the selector is a key.

15. The wireless telephone device of claim 14, wherein the selector is soft key.

16. The wireless telephone device of claim 14, wherein the selector is a hard key.

17. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the selector is an icon on  
5 a touch screen.

18. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the selector is a voice command.

19. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the recharge option is  
10 presented along with a start up menu of the telephone.

20. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, further comprising, a low-balance indicator configured to indicate to the user that the account balance of the stored-value  
15 calling account has dropped below a predetermined threshold.

21. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the recharge option is selectable by at most one touch by the user, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device.

22. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein the recharge option is selectable by at most two touches by the user, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device.

5 23. The wireless telephone device of claim 1, wherein communication program is configured to access a toll-free gateway in the communication network when communicating with the recharge service.

24. A method of recharging a stored-value calling account, comprising:  
10 installing a recharge option in a wireless telephone device, the recharge option being configured to initiate a recharge transaction, in order to add calling units to a stored-value calling account associated with the wireless telephone device;  
displaying the recharge option on the wireless telephone device;  
receiving a user selection of the recharge option;  
15 establishing communication with a recharge service via a communication network;  
and  
initiating the recharge transaction.

25. The method of claim 24, further comprising:  
20 detecting that a balance of the stored-value calling account associated with the wireless telephone device is below a predetermined amount.

26. The method of claim 25, wherein the step of detecting occurs upon power-up of the device.

27. The method of claim 24, wherein the recharge option is displayed on a start-up menu of the device.

28. The method of claim 24, wherein the recharge option is displayed as a menu option on a display of the wireless telephone device.

29. The method of claim 24, wherein the recharge option is displayed as an icon on a display of the wireless telephone device.

30. The method of claim 25, the user selection of the recharge option is made by selection of a menu option on the display.

31. The method of claim 25, the user selection of the recharge option is made by selection of a key on the wireless telephone device.

32. The method of claim 31, the key is a soft key.

33. The method of claim 31, the key is a hard key, dedicated to performing a recharge function.

34. The method of claim 24, wherein, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device, the recharge option is configured to be selected by at most one touch of a key by a user.

5 35. The method of claim 24, wherein, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device, the recharge option is configured to be selected by at most two touches of keys on the wireless telephone device by a user.

36. The method of claim 24, wherein the step of establishing communication includes sending a message from the wireless telephone device to a recharge server at the recharge service, via a WAN.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein the wireless telephone device includes a web browser, the method further comprising, downloading a recharge web site from the recharge service, and displaying the web site on the wireless telephone.

38. The method of claim 37, wherein the recharge option a bookmark on the wireless telephone device, the bookmark leading to the recharge web site.

20 39. The method of claim 37, wherein the recharge website includes a recharge amount option, the method further comprising, receiving user selection of the recharge amount option.

40. The method of claim 24, further comprising, applying fraud detection measures to the transaction.

41. The method of claim 24, further comprising, processing the recharge transaction and adding calling units to the stored value account.

42. The method of claim 24, wherein the recharge option is a telephone link to the recharge service, and establishing communication is accomplished at least in part by calling the recharge service via the PSTN.

43. The method of claim 42, wherein the recharge option is a telephone link to an Integrated Voice Response system at the recharge service.

44. The method of claim 42, wherein the recharge option is a telephone link to a live customer service representative at the recharge service.

45. The method of claim 41, wherein the recharge option an entry in a contacts list on the wireless telephone device.

46. The method of claim 24, wherein communication is established at least partially via a toll-free gateway on the communication network.



47. A pre-paid wireless telephone recharge system, comprising:

a recharge server connected to a communication network, the recharge server being configured to perform a recharge transaction on a stored-value telephone calling account; and

5 a web-enabled wireless telephone device having a recharge option installed thereon, the recharge option being selectable by a user upon actuation of a user input device on the wireless telephone device, the recharge option further being configured to cause a communication program on the wireless telephone device to initiate a recharge transaction with the recharge server via a communication network, in order to add calling units to the stored-value calling account.

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48. The system of claim 47, wherein, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device, the recharge option configured to be selectable by a user of the wireless telephone device by at most two touches of a user input device of the wireless telephone device.

49. The system of claim 47, wherein, from a top menu of the wireless telephone device, the recharge option configured to be selectable by a user of the wireless telephone device by at most on touch of a user input device of the wireless telephone device.

50. The system of claim 47, wherein communication network includes a WAN, and the communication program includes a web browser, and wherein upon selection of the recharge option, the web browser is configured to download a recharge website from a recharge server at the recharge service.

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51. The system of claim 47, wherein communication network includes the PSTN, and the communication program includes a telephone communications program, and wherein upon selection of the recharge option, the telephone communications program is configured to place a telephone call to the recharge service.

52. The system of claim 47, wherein the communication network includes a toll-free gateway, and the communication program is configured to route traffic related to the recharge transaction through the toll-free gateway.

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53. A wireless telephone device, including:

a user interface having a top menu;

a recharge option installed in the top menu, the recharge option being, upon selection, configured to initiate a recharge transaction, in order to add calling units to a stored value calling account associated with the wireless telephone device.

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54. A method for use in a wireless telephone device having a display, the method comprising:

detecting that a calling balance of a stored value calling account is lower than a predetermined threshold; and

- 5 presenting a recharge option on a display of the device, the recharge option being configured to initiate a recharge transaction, in order to add calling units to the stored value calling account.

Attorney for the Applicant